

File No:  
FF4-1/A25

Serial No:  
80/

COMMANDER AIR FORCE  
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET

U. S. Naval Air Station,  
San Diego, California

2-15  
JPM  
7 MAR 1955

1/31  
3166  
THIRD ENDORSEMENT on VA-125 AAR ser 2-55 of 11 February 1955 concerning  
AD-6 BuNo 135364, accident occurring 31 January 1955, Pilot BASTIAN

From: Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57)  
Via: Officer in Charge, U.S. Naval Aviation Safety Activity

Subj: VA-125 aircraft accident occurring 31 January 1955

Ref: (a) CINCPACFLT INSTRUCTION 3750.1C

(b) (5)

Copy to:  
BUAER (2)  
CINCPACFLT (COMPLETE)  
COMCARAIRGRU-12  
CO, VA-125  
BAR, EL SEGUNDO

*M. F. YERGER*  
M. F. YERGER  
By Direction

1

Ar25  
ORIGINAL

CVG-12/A25

CNC:vac

Ser: 40

21 FEB 1955

SECOND ENDORSEMENT on VA-125 AAR ser 2-55 concerning AD-6, BuNo.  
135364, pilot BASTIAN

From: Commander, Carrier Air Group TWELVE  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57)  
Via: (1) Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet  
(2) U.S. Naval Aviation Safety Activity

Subj: VA-125 Accident occurring 31 January 1955

(b) (5)

C. N. Conatser

C. N. CONATSER

Copy to:  
BUAER  
CINCPACFLT  
NAVAVSAPACT  
COMAIPAC  
BAR EL SEGUNDO  
CO, VA-125

2

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ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL

BEH:flc  
VA125/A25  
Ser: 73-55  
11 February 1955

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on AAR ser 2-55 concerning AD-6, 135364,  
accident occurring 31 January 1955, pilot  
BASTIAN

From: Commanding Officer, Attack Squadron ONE TWENTY-FIVE  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57)  
Via: (1) Commander, Carrier Air Group TWELVE  
(2) Commander Air Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet  
(3) U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Activity, Norfolk, Va.

Subj: VA-125 Accident occurring 31 January 1955

(b) (5)



*B. E. Lockett*  
B. E. LOCKETT

Copy to:  
BUMER  
COMAIRPAC  
NAVS. FACT NORVA  
BAR EL SEGUNDO

3

ORIGINAL



## INCIDENT ACCIDENT REPORT

PAGE 1 OF 4 PAGE

FORM 800-1 (REV. 1-60)

OPNAV REPORT 780

THE AIRCRAFT PILOT SHALL REPORT THIS REPORT TO THE C.O. OF THE ACTIVITY CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION. IT SHALL THEN BE FORWARDED BY THE C.O. TO ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT AAR INSTRUCTION.

1. DATE OF ACCIDENT 31 January 1955	2. AIRCRAFT MODEL AD-6	3. ACTIVITY QUALIFICATION NUMBER 0845	4. ACTIVITY QUALIFICATION NUMBER Attack Squadron 125	5. AAR SERIAL NO. 2-55
6. NAME OF UNIT OPERATING THE A/C Attack Squadron 125	7. LOCATION OF ACCIDENT Target 103, 15 Miles West of NAS El Centro, California	8. NAME OF PILOT Forrest W. Bastian Jr., LTJG., Gr.1	9. NAME OF COMMANDER CAG-12/COMAIRPAC	10. NAME OF UNIT TO WHICH OPERATOR ATTACHED CVC-12 Staff

PERSONNEL INVOLVED (Including names and titles only of those listed on members of A/C)

NAME, RANK, SERVICE, FILE NO. (When in Armed Forces)	AGE	SHIRT	POSITION	STATUS
(b) (6) 1315, USNR, Active Duty	29	Pilot	Cockpit	4

PILOT EXPERIENCE	TOTAL ALL MODEL HOURS	TOTAL THIS MODEL HOURS	LAST 12 MONTHS ALL MODELS	LAST 3 MONTHS ALL MODELS	LAST 3 MONTHS THIS MODEL	INSTRUMENT RATE Standard/No.1
797.4	12.4	170.2	56.7	12.4	29	DATE DESIGNATED 11-29-46

1. CHECK IF: 3150,000	12. PURPOSE OF FLIGHT High Altitude Dive Bomb	CODE LA77	13. TIME IN FLIGHT 8-50
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14. TYPE OF ACCIDENT Stall - Spin	15. MANEUVER INVOLVED Circling crash scene of
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16. WEATHER ☐ VFR ☐ IFR Unlimited 40 Miles ☐ YES ☐ NO Local VFR
--

17. WIND DIRECTION 253	18. WIND FORCE 8 Kt.	19. ALTITUDE ON IMPACT Inverted	20. ANGLE OF IMPACT 25°	21. STOPPING DISTANCE 30 Ft.	22. SPEED ON IMPACT 75 Kts.	23. IS THE FINE YELLOW TAPES ☐ YES ☐ NO
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2. AIRCRAFT AND ENGINE DATA (Use in all cases one of several forms of information, used in report)

HISTORY	SERVICE YEAR	MONTHS IN THIS YEAR	TOTAL FLY HOURS	FLY HOURS OVERHAUL	FLY HOURS ACCEPTANCE	TYPE OF AIRCRAFT	FLY HOURS CHECK	REMARKS
1	1954	3	0	Nov	116.4	90	13.5	6
2	1954	3	0	Nov	116.4	90	13.5	6

3. THIS A/C BEEN DAMAGED IN PREVIOUS ACCIDENTS DURING PRESENT SERVICE YEAR	☐ YES ☐ NO
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CONTINGENCY FACTORS (Check all that apply to this case, if other factors, list them)

4. PILOT (OR CREW) ERROR	88	5. MATERIAL FAILURE OR MALFUNCTION	88	6. OTHER	4
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7. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	8. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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9. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	10. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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11. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	12. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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27. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	28. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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29. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	30. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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31. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	32. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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33. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	34. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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35. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	36. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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37. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)	38. CHECK ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT (List them in this space)
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ORIGINAL

(b) (6)

(29) THE ACCIDENT

On 31 January 1955 at 0805U, LTJG Forrest Wilson Bastian Jr. (b) (6) 1315 USNR, Active Pilot, was airborne in AD-6 BuNo 135364 in company with four (4) other AD-6 aircraft on a routine High Altitude Dive Bombing flight from NAAS EL CENTRO, EL CENTRO California. At approximately 0828 the Bombing dives were commenced. Ltjg BASTIAN was the last aircraft in the flight, as he commenced his dive he spotted the aircraft proceeding him inverted at a dangerously low altitude and radioed "Mayday Mayday crash on the target". He then immediately reduced his altitude using his dive brakes until he was at a low altitude. He then retracted the dive brakes and lowered his landing gear and began circling in the vicinity of the crashed aircraft. No voice transmissions were heard from BASTIAN after he had radioed his Mayday call of the crashed AD. BASTIAN circled the crashed aircraft in right hand turns approximately five (5) times with his landing gear in the down position, he then reversed his pattern into left hand turns at a very low altitude and slow airspeed. Witnesses stated that BASTIAN was trying to tell them something by signaling with his hands, (he was believed to be pointing out the direction of the pilot of the first aircraft) shortly after this, he raised his landing gear and at approximately the same time the aircraft commenced a roll to the left. The aircraft dove into the ground inverted in a nose down attitude striking first on the left wing, apparently breaking off the wing and cartwheeling the aircraft onto nose and right wing in inverted position. An explosion and fire followed immediately. No sign of life was observed as stated on enclosure (3). A rescue helicopter from NAAS El Centro was dispatched at 0839. The pilot's body was removed at 0945 as stated in enclosure (6). Salvage operations commenced at 0800 1 February 1955. The wreckage was removed and salvage operations secured at 1700, 1 February 1955.

(30) DAMAGE TO THE AIRCRAFT

The aircraft struck the ground at an estimated angle of 20 degrees, exploded and burned upon impact. The fuselage forward of the dive brake hinges was completely demolished by impact and fire. The engine was presumed to have broken off on impact and bounced 28 feet from initial impact to final resting place, lying with propeller hub pointing upward minus all blades. Two of the propeller blades were underneath the engine, the pilot's compartment was crushed against the right side of the engine.

The empennage was twisted about 180 degrees from the fuselage. The port wing, which made the first contact with the ground was thrown about 30 feet beyond the rest of the wreckage, it was torn off at the wing root, the tip end was crushed and broken.

The starboard wing and landing gear assembly were broken and burned beyond easy recognition. The starboard wing made an impression in the desert approximately 12". The remaining pieces of the aircraft were spread over an area estimated at 100 yards. (See photo #8)

(31) THE INVESTIGATION

(b) (5)





(32) THE ANALYSIS

(b) (5)



(33) CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Conclusions:

(b) (5)



7

(B) Recommendations:

(b) (5)



WITNESS STATEMENT CONCERNING FATAL ACCIDENT INVOLVING AD-6 BUNO 135364

(b) (5)



*R. E. Hudson*  
R. E. HUDSON  
AM CREW LEADER

8

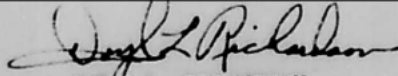
Enclosure (1)



WITNESS STATEMENT CONCERNING FATAL ACCIDENT INVOLVING AD-6 BUNO 135364

(b) (5)



  
DOYLE L. RICHARDSON

9

Enclosure (2)

WITNESS STATEMENT CONCERNING FATAL ACCIDENT INVOLVING AD-6 BUNO 135364

(b) (5)



*Francis T. Gianino*  
FRANCIS T. GIANINO

1

Enclosure (3)

WITNESS STATEMENT CONCERNING FATAL ACCIDENT INVOLVING AD-6 BuNo. 135364

(b) (5)



*H. S. Herrick*  
H. S. HERRICK, LCDR, USN

ENCLOSURE (4)

11

(b) (5)



*James M. Drysdale*  
JAMES M. DRYSDALE

Enclosure (5)





POSITION OF CRASHED AD-6 AIRCRAFT

PHOTO # 1

PHOTO #2

REAR VIEW OF THE AIRCRAFT, SHOWING THE POSITION OF THE ENGINE, AND THE POSITION OF THE WING, AND THE POSITION OF THE TAIL.











AIRCRAFT SPUN IN FROM TOP TO BOT ON LEFT. SECTION OF AIRCRAFT AT LEFT OF PICTURE IS THE PORT WING, ENGINE IS SHOWN IN CENTER, FUSelage AND EMPENNAGE AT THE RIGHT.

PHOTO #5





IMPRINT MADE BY STARBOARD WING. ENGINE IS IN THE BACKGROUND. MAN IS POINTING TO COCKPIT SECTION, WHERE PILOT WAS FATALLY INJURED.

PHOTO # 7

02

PORT LANDING GEAR SHOWN AT THE CENTER OF PICTURE ADJACANT TO PORT WING. PORT  
AILERON IS SHOWN AT THE LEFT. COCKPIT SECTION IS STILL BURNING. PORT FLAP IS  
LYING TO THE RIGHT OF PORT AILERON.

PHOTO #6